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091052Z Nov 01

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ACTION INR-00

INFO LOG-00 NP-00 AF-00 A-00 ACQ-00 CIAE-00 INL-00
DODE-00 DS-00 UTE-00 VC-00 TEDE-00 L-00 VCE-00
NSAE-00 TEST-00 USIE-00 IIP-00 DSCC-00 DRL-02 NFAT-00
SAS-00 /002W

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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0248
INFO NSC WASHDC
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

UNCLAS HARARE 003353

SIPDIS

AF/PD FOR COX, ROBERTSON, AF/S FOR SCHLACHTER, AF/P,
INR/R/MR, NSC FOR JENDAYI FRAZER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ZI](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#)

SUBJECT: DAILY NEWS EDITOR GEOFF NYAROTA ARRESTED

1. GEOFF NYAROTA, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF THE PRIVATELY OWNED DAILY "THE DAILY NEWS," AND HIS FORMER BUSINESS PARTNER WILF MBANGA WERE ARRESTED ON NOVEMBER 8. DETECTIVES FROM THE CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DEPARTMENT ARRESTED BOTH MEN AT THEIR HOMES AT 0600 HOURS. THE TWO WERE PICKED UP FOR INTERROGATION FOLLOWING ALLEGATIONS, CARRIED IN THE GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED DAILY "THE HERALD," THAT THEY FLOUTED INVESTMENT LAWS AND EXCHANGE CONTROL REGULATIONS WHEN THEY OBTAINED AN OPERATING LICENSE TO LAUNCH "THE DAILY NEWS" IN 1998. NYAROTA AND MBANGA WERE DETAINED OVERNIGHT AT RHODESVILLE POLICE STATION IN HARARE. ACCORDING TO A POLICE SPOKESMAN, THE TWO WERE PICKED UP ON "ALLEGATIONS OF FRAUD OR ALTERNATIVELY CONTRAVENING SECTION 40 OF THE ZIMBABWE INVESTMENT CENTER ACT BY SUPPLYING FALSE INFORMATION IN AN EFFORT TO OBTAIN AN OPERATING LICENSE."
2. THE NOVEMBER 9 EDITION OF THE "DAILY NEWS" CARRIED A FRONT-PAGE STORY ON THE ARRESTS, STATING THAT THE ARRESTS WERE CAUSED BY A CLERICAL ERROR MADE BY PRICEWATERHOUSECOOPERS IN DOCUMENTS RELATED TO THE NEWSPAPER'S ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION. ACCORDING TO STAFF AT THE "DAILY NEWS," PRICE WATERHOUSE-PREPARED DOCUMENTS INADVERTENTLY REFERRED TO A COMPANY NAMED MOTLEY INVESTMENTS (PRIVATE) LIMITED AS THE COMPANY THAT WAS TO CHANGE ITS NAME TO ASSOCIATED NEWSPAPERS ZIMBABWE (PRIVATE) LIMITED. THE CORRECT NAME OF THE COMPANY WAS MOTLEY TRADING (PRIVATE) LIMITED, THE COMPANY INITIALLY FOUNDED-BY NYAROTA AND MBANGA.
3. AS OF 0800 ON NOVEMBER 9, NYAROTA AND MBANGA WERE ST IN POLICE CUSTODY AT A SUBURBAN HARARE POLICE STATION ACCORDING TO NYAROTA'S SECRETARY, WHO VISITED THE TWO THIS MORNING AT THE POLICE STATION, THEY BOTH LOOKED FINE AND IN HIGH SPIRITS. THE PAPER'S DEPUTY EDITOR CHARACTERIZED THE ARRESTS AS "DURE POLITICA, HARASSMENT" AND SAID IT SHOWED BOTH THE SUCCESS OF TH

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"DAILY NEWS" AND THE "GOVERNMENT'S FEAR OF ALTERNATIVE
POINTS OF VIEW."

SULLIVAN

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